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Wednesday, 23 October 2002, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kiwanuka ..... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 57, 58 and 60 to 73 (*continued*)

Action on all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: In accordance with its programme of work and timetable, the Committee will continue with the third phase of its work, action on all draft resolutions and draft decisions submitted under agenda items 57, 58 and 60 to 73.

The Committee will continue to take action on draft resolutions that appear in informal working paper No. 3, which was distributed during the previous meeting.

At this stage, I would like to inform members that the Committee will not take action today on draft resolutions A/C.1/57/L.1 and L.17.

Before we proceed to take a decision on the draft resolutions contained in cluster 6, "Confidence-building measures, including transparency in armaments", I shall give the floor to those representatives wishing to make general statements other than explanations of vote or to introduce revised draft resolutions.

I give the floor to the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter.

Mr. Pfirter: Let me start by thanking you wholeheartedly, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity to address the Committee, a forum so intimately linked to the history and the operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). I wish you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of the Committee well in your deliberations.

The bond between the CWC and the First Committee explains why I have taken the initiative to come here and exchange with you our impressions on the status of the implementation of the CWC, one of the central tenets of multilateral disarmament, and share some of my impressions on the challenges ahead, as far as chemical disarmament is concerned.

My presence here this morning is also a tribute to this Committee and the United Nations as a whole, where my own personal approach and understanding of the issues pertaining to international security and disarmament were forged in the course of more than 12 years as a delegate for Argentina.

I am very grateful to you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me this opportunity during this important action week of the First Committee, and I would also like to thank through the Chair Mr. Mohammed Sattar, Secretary of the Committee, who facilitated these arrangements.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the delegations that in the course of the general debate have expressed their encouragement and support to me, as well as to all of you for having approved yesterday, by consensus, the resolution on the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of Development,

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02-65651 (E)

Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. It is a very important resolution that secures the continued links between the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), this Committee and the United Nations.

As you know I was designated Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons by a special Conference of the States Parties only three months ago. I came to the Organisation determined to adhere to the few simple but very clear principles of sound, prudent administration, transparency and efficient management. I am firmly committed to it being so.

It is no secret that the Organisation has been through an extremely delicate period, both from the institutional and the financial point of view, and this inevitably affected its capacity to discharge its mission adequately. But we can now say that the OPCW has weathered the storm and is back to normal business. This was clearly reflected in the recently completed seventh session of the Conference of the States Parties, which demonstrated the continued commitment from all member States, big and small, possessor and non-possessor States alike, to the objectives of our Convention.

This will come as good news for the international community as a whole, and for the United Nations and this Committee in particular, as among the core treaties in the field of disarmament, the Chemical Weapons Convention does have a specific and critical role. It is worth recalling that the CWC is the single multilateral instrument in the field of weapons of mass destruction, providing for disarmament, non-proliferation, international cooperation and assistance at the same time, and on a non-discriminatory basis. In this, the CWC stands as an example of what can be achieved when the political will exists to tackle questions of global concern through the formidable power of an internationally agreed on instrument.

The first challenge in eliminating the scourge of chemical weapons is precisely the elimination of those weapons that already exist. This is an immediate and crucial objective of the CWC. Thus, the OPCW is actively working on the verification of the destruction process. Possessor States have been making significant efforts to accelerate the destruction of Category 1 Chemical Weapons that were developed with a specific military function.

As of 1 October 2002, approximately 7,050 metric tons of chemical agents, including Category 1, Category 2 and binary component agents, or more than 10 per cent of the total stockpile declared by possessor States, have already been destroyed under OPCW verification.

The United States and India have met their obligations to destroy 20 per cent of their declared chemical stockpiles within five years after the entry into force of the Convention. The Russian Federation is also making significant progress towards such a goal, in particular through the imminent commencement of this exercise at the brand-new destruction facility in Gorny.

At the recent seventh Conference of the States Parties, important decisions were taken that will hopefully enable the Russian Federation to meet its obligations for the destruction of its chemical weapons stockpiles, including key aspects of the destruction programme. We are also moving forward in the approval of conversion plans in the Russian Federation and finalizing facility agreements both with Russia and other member States, in a process that will allow the international community to move towards a more stable and predictable outlook as far as chemical weapons are concerned. I should add that another State party is making progress in the destruction of its chemical stockpile. I think that this is all good news.

At this juncture, it must be pointed out that the coming in line of new destruction facilities expected in the coming years will inevitably and considerably increase the verification workload of the OPCW. Some estimates indicate that inspection activities might multiply by a factor of five. In any case, it is clear that in the very near future the Organisation will be facing a steep rise in verification activity due to a growing number of eligible facilities and installations around the world. This will pose an increased financial burden on the Organisation, something that must be borne in mind in future.

The number of inspections will therefore not only increase but also have to adapt to the new circumstances in the five years after entry into force of the CWC. In this respect we should bear in mind that verification has concentrated so far on monitoring the destruction of existing chemical weapons stockpiles, rather than detecting illegal new production. Therefore, more attention and resources will be devoted, both in

accordance with the Convention and with the recent decision of States parties, to monitoring the global chemical industry. This is an essential element that underlines the non-proliferation provisions of the Convention, in parallel with those specifically dealing with existing arsenals and their destruction.

The progress of the verification coverage is one of the most crucial tasks in our agenda and we have started to take action on it as early as two weeks ago, when the Conference of the States Parties decided to rebalance the number of inspections in 2003 to include more of the relevant installations producing, consuming or processing discrete organic chemicals.

It is encouraging to see that member States are actively engaged in a dialogue that will enable us to evolve in our verification activities in a manner that is fully consistent with the terms of the Convention and that reflects the increasing number of the inspectable facilities. This fact reveals the dynamic nature of the CWC and does not represent in any way a change in focus or the philosophy of inspections.

As I said at the beginning of my statement, as mandated by the Convention, international cooperation and assistance is an area of indisputable concern for the Organisation. The Convention encourages international cooperation in the development of chemistry and chemical technology, and aims at fostering trade in chemicals, chemical-manufacturing equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.

Recognizing the growing importance of these activities, which are of enormous relevance, both from the socio-economic and security angles, at the seventh session of the Conference of the States Parties, member States decided to increase the provision for international cooperation and assistance in our budget in excess of the overall growth in the budget, in order to ensure that our member States have immediate access to the benefits spelled out in the Convention in relation to those important areas.

The increase in our budget in the area of international cooperation and assistance will not be easy to finance, but I have given specific instructions to seek additional funds through savings in other programmes of the Organisation, as we are convinced that all the provisions of the Convention, including those related to international cooperation, merit our full attention. I am therefore firmly committed to ensuring that we achieve the goal of increasing the international cooperation budget and that we develop the programmes foreseen in our budget through the savings we have been mandated to achieve. This bold step will allow us to stand even closer to all our member States, fostering their technical expertise in the peaceful uses of chemistry and, ultimately, strengthening the efforts of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to combat international terrorism through strict adherence to this major international instrument on disarmament.

The use of chemical weapons by terrorist groups is a real and present danger. The reality is that only a few countries have the means and expertise necessary to protect themselves in cases of attacks with chemical weapons, regardless of the source. The immense majority of States must rely on foreign assistance to deal effectively with such emergencies. Membership in the Chemical Weapons Convention provides precisely that kind of assistance. We are currently improving the organisation's level of preparedness to assist member States in case of attacks or threats of attacks with chemical weapons coming from any source, be it States or terrorist groups.

Just a few weeks ago, our first major exercise, called "ASSISTEX 1", took place in Croatia and involved nearly a 1,000 participants from several member States. It is our intention to continue this kind of exercise, ideally involving other interested international organizations, particularly those already engaged in the area of international counter-terrorism, to participate in these efforts, share experiences and look for synergies in this field. I would like to express our deep gratitude to the Government of Croatia for having provided a venue for this exercise, as well as to all other participants.

But international cooperation and assistance in the Chemical Weapons Convention goes beyond dealing with emergency scenarios. It also includes giving adequate support to national authorities responsible for the actual implementation of the Convention in each member State on a range of issues, ranging from basic information about the Convention to guidance in the elaboration and delivery of national declarations and the preparation of national legislation as required by the Treaty. At the same time, through our so-called associate programme, we are training and exposing technical experts from all over the world to sound chemical practices in industry and making them aware of the potential risks of proliferation.

Universality is inseparable from the concept of global chemical disarmament. To achieve it, the OPCW is reaching out to the international community and civil societies everywhere, because we are convinced that the Chemical Weapons Convention and the regime it establishes can only be successful if it all States adhere to it. At present, 147 States have joined the Convention. Twenty-seven others have signed it, thus indicating their willingness to abide by its aims and objectives. But a few States still remain completely outside the purview of the Convention.

In some areas, such as the Middle East, the overall logic of the prevailing political situation necessarily influences the decisions of the countries of the region. In other areas, such as Africa, we are working very actively to promote adherence. We have instituted a so-called programme of action for Africa, an initiative we recently launched in consultation with African delegations to the Organisation, both in The Hague and Brussels.

The recent decision emanating from the last summit of the African Union concerning the implementation and universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention presents the OPCW with a challenge we cannot fail to meet. I personally will be deeply engaged in ensuring we make progress, in a joint effort with African nations, to achieve universality on the continent. In fact, we are already in consultation with the secretariat of the African Union to craft a programme that meets the requirements and priorities of the States concerned.

Beyond Africa, some gaps continue to exist in South-East Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pacific. We will therefore continue to focus our attention there in the near future.

We are beginning to see the results of our efforts. Since June 2001 four more States have joined the OPCW, namely, Nauru, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa and Uganda. By doing so, those nations have closed ranks with the ever-increasing number of nations resolutely opposed to chemical weapons.

Let me close by mentioning another important and immediate issue, which is the upcoming first Review Conference of the CWC, which will take place in The Hague in April of next year. Article VIII of the Convention states that, not later than one year after the expiry of the fifth, and the tenth year after entry into force, the Conference of States Parties shall convene in special session to undertake a review of the operation of the Convention. The main areas of review will include aspects related to the evolution and progress in chemical disarmament, the verification regime, national implementation, assistance and protection, international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited by the Convention and the impact of scientific and technological developments on the basic provisions of the Convention. More importantly, the Review Conference will give us a unique opportunity to assess the role of the Chemical Weapons Convention in the current world situation and, hopefully, result in a strong and unequivocal reaffirmation of the strong commitment of member States to its principles, objectives and implementation. We certainly look forward to the presence of the United Nations at that occasion. Its participation will not only serve to keep the United Nations well informed about what we are doing, but will also underscore the crucial support of this mother Organisation to the Chemical Weapons Convention and, ultimately, to the OPCW.

As the General Assembly can see, only five years after its entry into force the Chemical Weapons Convention has already become an undisputed factor in the international security equation. At a time when the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction reaches a new degree of urgency, the OPCW, as the sole international monitoring organization on chemical disarmament, deserves full support from Member States and the international community as a whole. A fluent and systematic dialogue and interaction with all other disarmament forums, such as the First Committee of the General Assembly, is a real necessity in this context. We are also actively seeking ways to upgrade our cooperation with the United Nations through the Department for Disarmament Affairs. I am encouraged by, and very grateful for, the full support we are receiving from Under-Secretary-General Dhanapala, which is crucial to increasing the number of areas of convergence and joint action between the United Nations and the OPCW. I also wish to extend my gratitude to the rest of the United Nations system in this regard.

We shall be following the deliberations and decisions of the First Committee this year, in particular with regard to items dealing with the CWC and weapons of mass destruction in general. That is only

right, given that, ultimately, no matter the country we speak for or the organization we represent, we are all united by an absolute commitment to international peace and security through disarmament.

Mr. Heinsburg (Germany): The last two weeks have demonstrated the topicality of the draft resolution entitled "Compliance with arms limitations and disarmament and non-proliferation agreements". Reports of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducting a clandestine nuclear weapon programme have given rise to deep concern. Such a programme would be a serious breach of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as well as other international agreements. The breach would not only be relevant to the regional situation but given the serious implication of cases of non-compliance with the NPT, the international community must be seized with the matter.

We are all called upon to ensure that international non-proliferation and arms control commitments are complied with, that such violations are stopped and that illicit activities and programmes are eliminated in a verifiable manner. We are a sponsor of the draft resolution on compliance, which addresses a key requirement for the implementation of agreements in the field of disarmament, arms limitation and non-proliferation.

Non-compliance or doubts about compliance are liable to undermine confidence in such agreements. They can call into question the credibility and the effectiveness of those agreements and of the international legal system as a whole. We expect that all signatories and parties to international agreements in the field of disarmament, arms limitation and non-proliferation strictly observe and fully implement their obligations. To enhance confidence in compliance, we need to strengthen existing agreements and treaties. Effective verifiability is a key aspect in that regard. It is a fundamental requirement for agreements and treaties relating to security. Germany, therefore, attaches particular importance to that issue. We emphatically advocate the improvement and enhancement of verification provisions for all existing multilateral instruments and regimes.

Other aspects relating to the implementation of existing agreements must also be addressed. Given the risk of a non-State actor gaining access to weapons of mass destruction, we need, inter alia, to strengthen national implementation. We must create common standards that ensure the effective and strict application of national implementation measures. Needless to say, we also need to fill existing gaps in the current pattern of multilateral instruments in the field of disarmament, arms limitation and non-proliferation.

Those are just a few examples of further work that needs to be done urgently. The United Nations has a key role to play in helping to ensure compliance and providing assistance that may be necessary for restoring and protecting the integrity of disarmament, arms limitation and non-proliferation agreements and treaties. The United Nations can bank on unqualified German support in that regard.

Mr. De La Fortelle (France) (*spoke in French*): I will be very brief. I will confine myself to saying that my delegation fully supports the points just made by the representative of Germany, and in particular all he said about observing treaties and thus the United States draft resolution in that regard.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.37. A recorded vote has been requested on operative paragraph 4 (b), 6 and the draft resolution as a whole.

Before proceeding to the vote, I shall call on those delegations wishing to explain their position or vote on the draft resolution. I call on the representative of Israel.

Mr. Itzchaki (Israel): We would like to inform the Chairman and the Secretariat that Israel would like to add its name to the list of sponsors of this draft resolution.

Mr. Boukaoutis (Greece): I would like to associate myself and my delegation with both the German and French delegations' statements concerning draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.54.

Mr. Osei (Ghana): We would also want to be listed as a sponsor of that particular draft resolution.

The Chairman: I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.37, submitted under agenda item 66, on general and complete disarmament, entitled "Transparency in armaments". This draft resolution

was introduced by the representative of the Netherlands at the 14th meeting, on 17 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are contained in document A/C.1/57/L.37, as well as in document A/C.1/57/INF/2.

In addition, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Barbados, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ghana, Israel and the Niger.

The Committee will now proceed to take action on operative paragraph 4 (b), which reads:

> "Requests the Secretary-General, with the assistance of a group of governmental experts to be convened in 2003, on the basis of equitable geographical representation, to prepare a report on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development, taking into account the work of the Conference on Disarmament, the views expressed by Member States and the reports of the Secretary-General on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development, with a view to a decision at its fifty-eighth session."

The Committee will now proceed to take action on operative paragraph 4 (b).

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Egypt, Syrian Arab Republic.

Abstaining:

Algeria, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

Operative paragraph 4 (b) of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.37 was retained by 134 votes to 2, with 17 abstentions.

The Chairman: I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution, which reads:

> "*Invites* the Conference on Disarmament to consider continuing its work undertaken in the field of transparency in armaments".

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada,

Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

Algeria, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Mexico, Myanmar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

Operative paragraph 6 of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.37 was retained by 134 votes to none, with 20 abstentions.

The Chairman: I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.37 as a whole.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Latvia, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

Algeria, Bahrain, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.37 as a whole was adopted by 132 votes to none, with 23 abstentions.

The Chairman: I give the floor to those representatives wishing to make statements in explanation of vote on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Al-Banai (Kuwait) *(spoke in Arabic)*: Allow me to make a statement on behalf of the member States

of the Arab League, which I am honoured to represent this month.

The member States of the Arab League have in past and consecutive years voiced their position on the subject of transparency in armaments. We expressed our view on the Register of Conventional Arms in document A/55/299/Add.2.

We believe that the Register reflects a first step towards achieving transparency in armaments, but that it needs to be expanded. Indeed, many member States of the Arab League do not believe that the Register, given its current limited scope, is sufficient to meet the exigencies of transparency — the purpose for which the Register was established. Nor do they believe it addresses their security concerns.

The Register includes information on conventional weapons and on weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons and sophisticated weaponry in general. If the Register addressed the issue of the possession by nations of arms and military equipment, it would be more balanced, less discriminatory and more all-encompassing. Indeed, not to include the most deadly and sophisticated weapons in the Register reflects an unbalanced and selective approach — an approach that will not enable us to attain our declared objectives.

We regret that the report of the group of governmental experts who have studied the Register over the past 10 years as well as the modalities for its improvement has not thus far included the question of national possession and manufacturing of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear weapons in particular. We reaffirm that this is not in line with the specific requirements of the Middle East, our own region, and thus reflects a clear imbalance in the way that the issue of the calibre of armaments is addressed. This is particularly important given that Israel continues to occupy Arab lands and possesses the most lethal and sophisticated weapons of mass destruction.

We believe that we are failing to shoulder our responsibilities insofar as disarmament is concerned. Ours is a firm and consistent position of principle that will not change until our concerns are met. Our member States want to see the principles of disarmament implemented, and, as a result, we have supported other draft resolutions on disarmament in this Committee.

We hope that our concerns will be taken on board so that we can become a party to the Register and fully support this approach.

Mr. Maandi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): My delegation fully subscribes to the statement made by the representative of Kuwait on behalf of the League of Arab States. We have a particular interest in the question of transparency, a confidence-building measure that cannot be neglected or overlooked in any case. We have always supported initiatives to promote genuine transparency.

My delegation was nevertheless unable to vote in favour of the draft resolution entitled "Transparency in armaments" because it is extremely limited in its response to the expectations of many States and insensitive to their concerns about equal treatment in the question of transparency in armaments.

The text before us continues to address transparency through the frameworks laid out in paragraphs 4 (b) and 6. It is therefore hostage to a partial approach that obstructs any effort to go beyond mere transfers of conventional weapons. Like the expert report, it confines itself to the Register of Conventional Arms and takes no account of the frequently cited need to expand the Register's scope to cover other categories of weapons.

Can we truly build confidence when we have deliberately chosen to confine ourselves exclusively to the transfer of conventional weapons? The answer, obviously, is that we cannot, because maintaining a Register as a tool of transparency cannot be guaranteed without honest and universal participation and in the absence of an approach involving all armaments issues and categories of weapons; and because a balanced treatment of the various elements of transparency in armaments should not be based on a selective, and hence discriminatory approach. Rather, it should seek to create a Register as a universal and global system that would require account to be taken of such ineluctable aspects as national production capacities, related purchases, the accumulation of stocks and the rapid acquisition of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons and advanced technology with potential military use.

My delegation hopes that the sponsors of the draft resolution will take into consideration the concerns of many delegations in order to win the broadest possible support for it.

Mr. Atieh (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation supports the statement made by the representative of Kuwait on behalf of the League of Arab States.

We declare our full support for the position of the States members of the League of Arab States with regard to transparency in armaments, as embodied in document A/55/299/Add.2 of 16 October 2000. The Syrian Arab Republic also affirms its full support for the global trend towards the establishment of an international community free from the use or threat of force, a world governed by the principles of justice, equity and peace.

While affirming our readiness to participate in any international effort sincerely aimed at attaining that end, we wish to draw the First Committee's attention to the fact that the draft resolution entitled "Transparency in armaments", contained in document A/C.1/57/L.37, does not take into account the specific situation of the Middle East, which is marked by the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict. That conflict endures because Israel continues to occupy Arab territories and refuses to implement the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. Israel continues to possess the most sophisticated and deadliest of weapons. Moreover, it is capable of manufacturing and locally stockpiling sophisticated weapons, including nuclear weapons. All of this confirms the fact that the transparency which Israel claims to apply to armaments reflects only a small portion of its arsenal of sophisticated and deadly weapons.

We therefore abstained in the voting on this draft resolution.

Mr. Hu Xiaodi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China has always attached importance to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We expect that the Register will contribute to promoting confidence among nations and to enhancing global and regional security. That is why China supported and contributed to the Register's establishment.

As soon as the Register was created in 1993, China submitted several consecutive annual reports. As explicitly stated in the relevant resolution of the General Assembly, the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is a record of legitimate arms transfers between sovereign States. Since 1996, however, in open defiance of the provisions of the aforementioned resolution, a certain State has registered arms sales to the Chinese province of Taiwan in the form of a footnote. By registering its arms sales to Taiwan, that country created two Chinas within the United Nations — one China and one Taiwan.

China cannot accept this situation and has therefore been forced to suspend its reporting to the Register since 1998. Until and unless that country takes steps to rectify its ill-advised practice and the solemn nature of the Register is restored, China will clearly not be in a position to submit its report to the Register.

In the light of all this, China has been unable to support the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.37 and abstained in the voting on it. We call once again on the country concerned immediately to correct its mistake and to establish the necessary conditions for the Chinese side to resume its participation in the Register.

Mr. Goussous (Jordan): I would like to associate myself with the statement made by the representative of Kuwait, on behalf of the United Nations Member States belonging to the League of Arab States.

Jordan has been a staunch supporter of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We regard the Register as an indispensable mechanism for achieving transparency in armaments, which leads to confidence-building, especially in conflict-prone regions such as the Middle East. However, we believe that the Register will not be effective unless its scope is enlarged to include military holdings and procurement through national production, as well as weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons. We therefore regret the fact that the panel of governmental experts has failed to deal with this problem for the last ten years.

Jordan reports regularly to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, and we will continue to do so, in spite of the fact that the Register has not yet been enlarged pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/36.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Once again this year, Cuba voted in favour of the draft resolution on transparency in armaments, contained in document A/C.1/57/L.37. In consideration of the overall positive balance of the text, we support the maintenance of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, to which Cuba reports every year.

We also support fine-tuning that instrument, which is a confidence-building tool, in order to gain the participation of the greatest possible number of States.

Notwithstanding our position in support of the resolution as a whole, we should like to place on record our reservations with respect to operative paragraph 6. As we have done in past years, Cuba abstained from the separate vote taken on that paragraph because it is our view that the Conference on Disarmament has already carried out and completed its work on transparency. The decision on whether to take up that issue again in the Conference on Disarmament belongs to that body alone. Cuba therefore reserves the right to take a definitive position on this issue in the context of the Conference on Disarmament, mindful of the need for the Conference to adopt a balanced agenda that would duly take into account the priorities on disarmament established by the General Assembly.

Mr. Min (Myanmar): I should like to take the floor to explain my delegation's position on the resolution on transparency in armaments, contained in document A/C.1/57/L.37. We believe that transparency in armaments should be universal, non-discriminatory and on a voluntary basis. We should like to stress here that transparency should not be confined to conventional weapons alone. There should also be transparency on weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. We respect the good intentions of the co-sponsors of this draft resolution. At the same time, we are of the view that practical and achievable measures should also be addressed in the draft resolution.

My delegation has difficulties with some of the elements in the draft resolution. We have reservations with respect to operative paragraph 4 (b) and operative paragraph 6 of A/C.1/57/L.37. We believe that operative paragraph 4 (b) is premature and ambitious and wish that the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the continuing operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and on its further development, with the assistance of a group of governmental experts to be convened in 2003. At the same time, we see no reason to invite the Conference on Disarmament to consider continuation of its work undertaken in the field of transparency in armaments, as mentioned in operative paragraph 6.

The Conference on Disarmament was not able to agree on a programme of work for 2002 owing to the different approaches towards banning fissile materials, nuclear disarmament, prevention of an arms race in outer space and security assurances. Therefore, we would not prejudge the process in the Conference on Disarmament. We need more time to study transparency in armaments in depth. For those reasons, my delegation abstained in the voting on operative paragraph 4 (b) and operative paragraph 6, as well as on the draft resolution as a whole.

Mr. Umer (Pakistan): I will be brief in my explanation. My country has followed the initiative of the Register since its very inception, and we have been actively involved in the various panels of experts that were set up to examine its operations and to enhance its effectiveness. And we fully subscribe to the objectives that underpin the Register. We have been contributing data and submitting information to the United Nations for the Register regularly every year since the Register's very inception.

However, with respect to draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.37, which has been adopted, we have difficulties with operative paragraph 4 (b), especially the call for the convening of yet another panel of experts in 2003. In view of the fact that the recommendations of the panel of experts set up in 2000 are being examined and studied by Member States, the establishment of yet another panel appears to us to be premature, if not entirely unwarranted. We believe that countries should be given time to analyse and to reflect on the findings of the 2000 panel before deciding on the establishment of its successor.

We also believe that the current Register should be universalized and that information should be conveyed fully and in a timely manner by the maximum number of countries before embarking upon the Register's further expansion or development. It was for those factors that my delegation was constrained to abstain on this draft resolution.

Mr. Issa (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to explain the abstention of my delegation in the vote on the draft resolution concerning transparency in armaments contained in document A/C.1/57/L.37. Our reservations on this draft resolution reaffirm our established position regarding the strengthening of transparency in armaments since it is one of the confidence-building measures that are necessary in any

international action in the field of disarmament, whether at the international or regional level.

Unfortunately, the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, which was established a decade ago as a first step towards strengthening transparency and building confidence, is unable in its present form to fulfil its role because it has not met all the conditions necessary for it to be viable. Egypt has repeatedly stressed and will continue to stress, in word and deed, through its participation in both governmental expert groups, the need to further develop the Register to enable it to achieve its goals and be a tool for building confidence and strengthening transparency.

However, 10 years have elapsed without any steps having been taken to further develop the Register, and the Register is not in step with developments related to ensuring conventional-arms verification in the foreseeable future.

Egyptian reservations on this draft resolution have three dimensions. We still have reservations on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms in its present form, and we also have reservations regarding our participation in it. The second dimension is that we continue to have reservations regarding the draft resolution on transparency in armaments, since it does not call strongly enough for the development of the Register and the updating of its various elements. The third dimension is that we maintain our reservations regarding our participation in the group of governmental experts for 2003, as well as in any subsequent expert group, unless the mandates of the expert group includes tackling substantive aspects of the development of the Register. Otherwise, it would be meaningless to set up panels of governmental experts that would submit periodic reports containing no new elements.

Finally, we would express our appreciation and thanks to Ambassador Chris Sanders, representative of the Netherlands to the Conference on Disarmament, for his tireless and sincere efforts and for his having taken account of all of Egypt's considerations on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.37. The sponsors, however, were unable to take those considerations into account. Through his faithful, sincere and transparent endeavours, he deserves our esteem and, indeed, the nickname "Mr. Transparency".

Mr. Baeidi Nejad (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.37, entitled "Transparency in armaments", since, contrary to the letter and the spirit of the 1992 resolution that founded the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, the draft resolution insists that the Register cover only certain aspects of the seven categories of conventional weapons. We are of the view that the Register should be developed to encompass other aspects of conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons — which are, in fact, the main sources of threat and tension.

We hope that an expansion of the Register to cover those aspects would be considered seriously and positively during the next gathering of the panel of governmental experts in order to enable more Members to participate in the Register. My delegation, however, subscribes to the principles enshrined in the draft resolution on promoting transparency and confidence among States through the exchange of information, and we hope that, with the appropriate expansion of the Register, such a process of sharing would be supported by all United Nations Members.

Mr. El Kadiri (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): My delegation supported paragraphs 4 (b) and 6 of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.37 in order to convey our readiness for dialogue, our encouragement of all initiatives designed to strengthen transparency in the field of armaments, and our readiness to take part in such efforts.

Nevertheless, my delegation is still persuaded that in its current state, the Register of Conventional Arms remains incomplete and does not meet the expectations and aspirations of my country and of the entire Arab Group. It is for that reason that my delegation abstained in the vote on the draft resolution as a whole.

Mr. Tajouri (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to explain my delegation's vote on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.37, entitled "Transparency in armaments". I would like to associate myself with what sisterly Kuwait said on behalf of the Arab Group.

As the Committee very well knows, my country generally supports transparency as an early warning tool. However, the Register of Conventional Arms does not meet that criterion. We believe unequivocally that

the Register will remain inadequate unless it is expanded in scope to include all kinds of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, locally produced weapons and advanced military technology, in view of the security imbalance and disturbances in the region to which we belong, due to Israel's possession of huge nuclear arsenals and capabilities that it uses to threaten the peace and security of the region — not to mention its arsenals of advanced and sophisticated conventional arms and its vast national military production.

Weapons of mass destruction destabilize the whole world. This destabilization is much greater than that caused by some conventional arms: international peace, security and stability are also in jeopardy. We all know that the General Assembly's first special session devoted to disarmament, in 1978, accorded first priority to weapons of mass destruction, primarily nuclear weapons, and secondary priority to conventional arms.

In conclusion, unless the concerns of my delegation are met and are reflected in the register, we shall maintain our position, that is, we shall continue to abstain from voting on the draft resolution.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.54.

I now call upon those delegations wishing to explain their vote or position on the draft resolution before a decision is taken.

Mr. Albin (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the delegations of South Africa and Mexico.

The delegations of South Africa and Mexico will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.54. That draft resolution recognizes the fundamental importance that the objectives of arms limitation and disarmament and non-proliferation have for international peace and security. The observance by States of their obligations in that area can only strengthen the prospects for peaceful coexistence and for international cooperation.

The delegations of South Africa and Mexico note with appreciation that, in addition to the obligations of States parties to a treaty, the text recognizes other sources of obligation under international law that transcend contractual provisions. The delegations of South Africa and Mexico are convinced that the new language incorporated into the draft resolution's preamble does not in any way change, modify or interpret the duties and obligations derived from the well-established and accepted provisions of treaty law or other sources of international law, including international custom.

In addition, the delegations of South Africa and Mexico believe strongly in the progressive development of international law as the best way to promote international peace and security, especially in the field of arms limitation and disarmament and non-proliferation. South Africa and Mexico are profoundly convinced that this draft resolution — even if makes no express reference to that — uniquely strengthens our conviction that it is necessary to redouble our efforts to strengthen multilaterally the international architecture in that area, and that we should commit ourselves to ensuring the establishment of a virtuous circle of compliance, negotiation and conclusion with regard to additional agreements on arms limitation, disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): In taking action on this draft resolution, "Compliance with arms limitation and disarmament and non-proliferation agreements", contained in document A/C.1/57/L.54, the Committee again takes up an issue that was last considered during the fifty-second session. Cuba laments the fact that the draft resolution to be adopted this year omits important substantive elements that were contained in resolution 52/30 of 9 December 1997. We are particularly concerned at the modifications made in operative paragraph 6, which omits references to the arms limitation and disarmament and non-proliferation agreements that are now being studied or negotiated. In addition, preambular paragraph 7 eliminates the references to the conclusion of additional agreements on arms limitation, disarmament and non-proliferation. Likewise eliminated were paragraphs in which the Secretary-General was requested to continue providing assistance in the restoration and protection of the integrity of disarmament agreements.

I do not intend to point out other modifications that we consider relevant. I shall say only that, thus far, we have heard no convincing argument that explains the changes that have been introduced this year. Although we believe that draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.54 represents a step backwards with respect to resolution 52/30, Cuba will not oppose the consensus, if that is the decision taken. We shall act in

that way, given our priority interest in preserving and strengthening multilateralism and in ensuring strict compliance with all arms limitation and disarmament and non-proliferation agreements.

We hope that, when this matter is again considered during the fifty-ninth session, all these considerations will be taken duly into account.

Mr. Rowe (Sierra Leone): My delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/57/L.54, because we wholeheartedly share the principles and the concerns expressed therein. We do so, however, on the understanding — indeed, the implied assurance — that all States, especially those endowed with nuclear capability, including weapons of mass destruction, will commit themselves to the total elimination of all such weapons. Sierra Leone maintains that nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction continue to pose a serious threat to mankind.

On this, the eve of the anniversary of the founding of the Organization, which is dedicated to saving mankind from the scourge of war — and, I might add here, nuclear war — we wish to emphasize the need for universal participation in existing multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. We consider the principle of compliance to be as important as the principles of universality and multilateralism in disarmament and non-proliferation. The three are inextricably linked. Our position on that issue is clearly expressed in operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, which states that the General Assembly "Welcomes the role that the United Nations has played and continues to play in restoring the integrity of, and fostering negotiations on, certain arms limitation and disarmament and non-proliferation agreements in the removal of threats to peace".

The Chairman: The Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.54.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.54, submitted under agenda item 66, "General and complete disarmament", entitled "Compliance with arms limitation and disarmament and non-proliferation agreements." This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of the United States of America at the 16th meeting, held on 18 October. Sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in document A/C.1/57/L.54, as well as in document A/C.1/57/INF/2.

In addition, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Afghanistan, Australia, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Chile, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Malawi, the Marshall Islands, Monaco, Mongolia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and Zambia.

The Chairman: The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that the Committee adopt it without a vote. As I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.54 was adopted.

The Chairman: I now give the floor to those delegations wishing to explain their positions following the adoption of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.54.

Ms. Panckhurst (New Zealand): We wish to make the following explanation of our delegation's position on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.54, on compliance with arms limitation and disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. Last time such a draft resolution was presented, in 1997, New Zealand was pleased to join in sponsoring it. Today, however, we found ourselves unable to sponsor the text that has been presented.

The issue that has dominated this year's General Assembly session has been Iraq's non-compliance with Security Council resolutions. Now we have been informed of North Korea's possible non-compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In the light of these circumstances and of our firm commitment to compliance with international treaties, we would have joined in sponsoring a draft resolution that strongly urged countries to comply with arms limitation, disarmament and non-proliferation agreements.

We have the following concerns with this text: in its second and third preambular paragraphs, the text includes the phrase "treaties to which they are parties". The explicit reference to this phrase might be taken to

imply a weakening of customary international law, and the rule of law generally. The rule that States do not have to adhere to treaties that they have not ratified or to which they have not acceded is so entrenched in international law that it could not be called into question. The draft resolution acknowledges other sources of international law; however, as drafted, the text is ambiguous as to the emphasis it places on those other sources.

We note that wording from the 1997 text (*resolution 52/30*) has been omitted which would have acknowledged future work and the conclusion of additional agreements. New Zealand is seriously concerned that there has been so little progress towards implementation of the 13 steps agreed to at the 2000 NPT Review Conference; that a mechanism for verification and compliance for the Biological Weapons Convention is in jeopardy; and that little progress has been made on addressing the dangers presented by weapons of mass destruction.

We also note that the request from the 1997 text for the Secretary-General to provide assistance which may be necessary in order to protect the integrity of disarmament agreements has been omitted. As we said in our general statement, collective problems require collective solutions, and hence it is appropriate that assistance be provided to those who are genuinely having difficulties with compliance.

Mr. Rivas (Colombia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

We finally come to the issue of verification addressed in paragraph 6. It is a fundamental issue that goes to the credibility of all international agreements. The ability to be able to thoroughly examine and to be satisfied that a country is accordance with its international obligations is important for the confidence that both civil society and Governments have in international agreements. We wholeheartedly agree with the sentiment expressed in that paragraph. However, as already stated, in the light of current circumstances, we believe that it does not go far enough.

No international compliance agreement or regime is 100 per cent fail-safe. Equally, no domestic regime is completely effective in stopping aberrant behaviour. But that has never been regarded as reason for not putting such a regime in place.

Mr. Moura (Brazil): Brazil followed the consensus in the adoption of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.54. We share broadly the concerns addressed in it and go along with most of its provisions. Nevertheless, we feel it necessary to place on record our disagreement with some of its paragraphs, which depart substantially from the language contained in General Assembly resolution 52/30 and previous texts that were adapted by consensus by this body.

The new language, in particular in the second and third preambular paragraphs, reduces the scope of compliance and respect for international norms in the field of arms limitation, disarmament and non-proliferation. This is a regrettable setback in relation to resolution 52/30.

Similarly, we believe that the suppression of references in the sixth and seventh preambular paragraphs to further efforts and to the conclusion of additional agreements in this field weakens in a totally undesirable manner consensus language contained in resolution 52/30. We remain convinced that the strengthening of the international architecture in the field of arms limitation, disarmament and non-proliferation is essential for the promotion of international peace and security.

Additionally, the new language in paragraph 6 fails to fully reflect the role of verification as a tool for enhancing confidence and assessing compliance. Verification is, in our view, a necessary not a dispensable tool.

On those specific points, the Brazilian delegation remains attached to the language contained in resolution 52/30. The entire international framework of disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements must be fully respected, and represents the general will of the international community in these matters.

Mr. Issa (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to explain Egypt's position on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.54, entitled "Compliance with arms limitation and disarmament and non-proliferation agreements". The fact that Egypt joined the consensus, however, must not be construed to mean that we are in agreement with all its paragraphs. As a matter of fact, we wish that the delegations of the United States and of other sponsoring countries had retained the language of resolution 52/30 of 1997 and had remained faithful to

it, because that is language that can forge a real consensus.

Egypt does not think that any draft resolution adopted by the First Committee can supersede the commitments entered into by Member States through international agreements to which they are full parties. Nor can it be put above their obligations to respect the objects and purposes of agreements they have signed. In that respect, the provisions of articles 11, 12 and 18 of the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, regarding the obligations incumbent upon States as a result of agreements they have signed, are explicit. Neither preambular nor operative paragraphs of any resolution can cancel such obligations.

The Egyptian delegation notes that references in resolution 52/30 to continued future work in the field of disarmament have been deleted from the text that was adopted today. This is a basic element we should not ignore.

Verification activities regarding compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements are also essential. These too have also been ignored in this draft resolution, in contrast to resolution 52/30, adopted by the General Assembly in 1997. In that regard, we join New Zealand and Brazil in emphasizing that this remains a vital and important issue.

The Acting Chairman: We shall proceed to cluster VII, "Disarmament machinery". Before the Committee proceeds to take a decision on draft resolutions contained in cluster VII, I will give the floor to those representatives wishing to make general statements, other than in explanation of vote, or to introduce revised draft resolutions.

Mr. Obidov (Uzbekistan): I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of five Central Asian States, namely, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

I would like to briefly introduce the draft resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia contained in document A/C.1/57/L.24/Rev.1. This document is the product of our collective efforts. In previous years, we have enjoyed broad support through consensus resolutions of the General Assembly, such as 52/38 S, 53/77 A and 55/33 W, regarding the establishment of a Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone. Central Asian countries have also conducted a number of United Nations-sponsored meetings of experts from Central Asian countries regarding the establishment of such a zone.

The Chairman returned to the Chair.

The current text of the draft resolution reflects new developments that have taken place during the process of establishing a Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone. I am pleased to inform the Committee that, at a meeting of a group of experts in Samarkand, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have just drafted agreed texts for a draft treaty and protocols for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia.

All five Central Asian States continue to consult with the five nuclear-weapon States about the draft treaty and protocols for the establishment of such a zone in Central Asia, in accordance with all the relevant paragraphs contained in the principles and guidelines on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, which were adopted at the substantive session of the Disarmament Commission in 1999. All five Central Asian States are committed to sign the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty as soon as possible.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the Department for Disarmament Affairs, led by Under-Secretary-General Jayantha Dhanapala, and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific for their ongoing assistance in the process of establishing a Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone.

On behalf of all five Central Asian countries, allow me express our sincere hope that, like similar texts in previous years, this draft resolution will enjoy unanimous support of representatives to the Committee, and that it will be adopted without a vote during the current session of the General Assembly.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.6.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the vote.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.6, entitled "Report of the Disarmament Commission", was introduced by the

representative of Italy at the 12th meeting, on 15 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in document A/C.1/57/L.6.

The Chairman: The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that the Committee adopt the draft resolution without a vote. Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.6 was adopted.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.13.

I call on the representative of Chile, who wishes to speak in explanation of position.

Mr. Acuña (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to place on record its position with regard to the draft resolution entitled "Report of the Conference on Disarmament", contained in document A/C.1/57/L.13. The First Committee and, subsequently, the General Assembly, routinely address the annual draft resolution on this subject. Unfortunately, as we are all aware, it also appears to have become routine over many years for there not to be any substantive progress for the Conference on Disarmament to report about.

My delegation agrees with the contents of every preambular and operative paragraph of the draft resolution under consideration. However, we would like to convey to the Committee our deep concern about the deadlock in multilateral negotiations on disarmament that exists at the Conference on Disarmament. We also wish to point out our priority and very specific interest in seeing this situation reversed. In that regard, Chile spared no effort in addressing the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, and with that goal in mind, it has resolutely supported the new initiative launched at the beginning of August 2002 by group of five former chairmen of that Conference, made up of the Permanent Representatives of Algeria, Belgium, Chile, Colombia and Sweden. The initiative is reflected in a non-paper on the programme of work. That initiative, which is cross-sectional, has the advantage of being based on specific past efforts designed to rally consensus and seeks to break the five-year impasse that has adversely affected the Conference, so that it can resume its substantive work.

The Chairman: I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.13, entitled "Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session", which was introduced by the representative of Hungary at the 11th meeting, on 14 October. The sponsor of the draft resolution is contained in document A/C.1/57/L.13.

The Chairman: The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that the draft resolution be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.13 was adopted.

I call on the representative of Germany in explanation of position.

Mr. Heinsburg (Germany): As usual, the draft resolution on the report of the Conference on Disarmament was adopted by consensus. That, however, should not obscure our deep disappointment and concern about the current state of affairs in the Conference on Disarmament. Given existing and new threats, in particular relating to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the risk of terrorists gaining access to such weapons, the ongoing deadlock seems hardly tolerable. Linkages that were created and are being maintained among various issues on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament cannot be justified against the backdrop of a changing international security environment.

The Conference on Disarmament, during the past year, has again failed to establish subsidiary bodies to conduct substantive work relating to the issues on its agenda. Despite the imaginative proposal for a work programme put forward by five Ambassadors, which was supported by Germany during its presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and which we will continue to support, the Conference has also failed to live up to its responsibility as a sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body. While we would welcome a substantive debate and negotiations relating to the issue of preventing the weaponization of outer space, Germany does not see any reason why negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty are

being held hostage to an agreement on outer space, at a time when there is a particular concern relating to the production of weapon-grade fissile material and the risks of terrorists gaining access to such material. There is no time to lose. There is no excuse for not immediately starting substantive negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

Against the backdrop of emerging new threats, in particular the possibility that a so-called dirty bomb could be a terrorist's weapon of choice, Germany, during its presidency of the Conference on Disarmament this summer, initiated a new discussion on radiological weapons, an issue that has long been neglected but that today, however, is undeniably topical. In addressing that subject, which we suggested be considered independently of the other issues on which the Conference has primarily focused during the past year, we saw an opportunity for the Conference to respond in a timely fashion to new threats. In order to stimulate a discussion, we have presented a paper that was also issued as Conference on Disarmament document CD/1681. We hope that, on the basis of that contribution, further work will be conducted in the Conference on Disarmament, with a view to establishing whether the issue should again be actively pursued by the Conference. In doing so, we should avoid falling back into what are by now well-rehearsed ways, risking the creation of new barriers against substantive discussions.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.29.

Does any representative wish to explain its position or vote before a decision is taken on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.29?

As there are none, I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.29, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa" That draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Egypt, on behalf of the State Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States, at the 14th meeting, on 17 October.

The Chairman: The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that the Committee adopt the draft resolution without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.29 was adopted.

The Chairman: As there are no representatives wishing to take the floor in explanation of position, the Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.38. I give the floor to the representative of Nigeria, who would like to make a general statement.

Mr. Udedibia (Nigeria): My delegation asked for the floor just to inform sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.38 that the suggested amendment to the draft resolution has been withdrawn by the Member States that proposed it. Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.38, on which the Committee is about to take a decision, therefore remains as originally submitted and sponsored. The amendment was withdrawn following fruitful discussions with the Member States that made the proposal and with their understanding. It had been circulated earlier to Permanent Missions of the sponsors for their views and comments. In view of the withdrawal of the amendment, my delegation wishes to request that the sponsors of this draft resolution ignore the proposed amendment.

The Chairman: As there are no other representatives wishing to speak in explanation of vote after the vote, I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.38, entitled "United Nations disarmament fellowship training and advisory services". The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Nigeria at the 11th meeting, on 14 October. The list of sponsors is contained in document A/C.1/57/L.38, as well as in A/C.1/57/INF/2.

The Chairman: The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that the Committee adopt the draft without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.38 was adopted.

The Chairman: We shall now proceed to consider draft resolutions under cluster 8, "Other disarmament measures".

I give the floor to the representative of Lebanon on a point of order.

Mr. Assaf (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): In the Arabic version of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.1, there seems to be a typographical error in the fifth and last paragraph. Instead of "fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly", the Arabic text reads "fifty-seventh session". We would like this to be corrected.

The Chairman: We will take note of that correction.

The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.7/Rev.2.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.7/Rev.2, entitled "United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education". This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Mexico at the 8th meeting, on 9 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in document A/C.1/57/L.7/Rev.2. In addition, Australia has also become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

The Chairman: The sponsors of the draft resolution have expressed the wish that the Committee adopt the draft resolution without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.7/Rev.2 was adopted.

The Chairman: I will now give the floor to the representative of France, who wishes to make a statement in explanation of position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. De la Fortelle (France) (*spoke in French*): I wish to refer to the draft resolution submitted by Mexico in document A/C.1/57/L.7/Rev.2, entitled "United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education".

France welcomes the results of the study carried out by the United Nations, with the help of a group of governmental experts, on disarmament and non-proliferation education. France nevertheless would like to voice certain reservations about the wording of the fourth preambular paragraph.

First, the selective listing of categories of arms, from which certain ones have been excluded — such as, for example, anti-personnel mines, which have claimed millions of victims throughout the world — does not seem to us to reflect the results of the study. Also, the emphasis placed in the drafting of that paragraph on weapons of mass destruction also seems to us to be one-sided and unbalanced.

Finally, the reference to terrorism would not appear to us to be relevant in this context.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.12.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.12, entitled "Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control". The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the States members of the United Nations that are members of the Non-Aligned Movement at the 16th meeting, on 18 October.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan,

Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

France, Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.12 was adopted by 153 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.

The Chairman: We shall now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.20.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.20, entitled "United Nations Disarmament Information Programme". The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Mexico at the 12th meeting, on 15 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in document A/C.1/57/L.20 as well as in document A/C.1/57/INF/2.

The Chairman: The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.20 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.20 was adopted.

The Chairman: We shall now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.50.

A recorded vote has been requested.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.50 is entitled "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament". This draft resolution was introduced by the representative of India at the 15th meeting, on 17 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in documents A/C.1/57/L.50 and A/C.1/57/INF/2. In addition, the following country has become a sponsor of the draft resolution: El Salvador.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania,

Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Yugoslavia.

Abstaining:

Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Chile, Georgia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Paraguay, Russian Federation, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Tonga, Ukraine, Uruguay.

Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.50 was adopted by 93 votes to 46, with 18 abstentions.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of the Republic of Korea to make an explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Lew (Republic of Korea): This year, my delegation has changed its previous position of abstention and voted against draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.50, entitled "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament". My delegation believes that the current draft resolution lacks balance by failing to acknowledge the obvious contribution of current export control regimes to deterring the proliferation not only of equipment and technologies related to weapons of mass destruction, but also of dual-use goods and technologies with wide military applications.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of Israel to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Itzchaki (Israel): My delegation wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply after listening to the statements made in the course of the action taken on draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.37, entitled "Transparency in armaments".

As in previous years, we have again been forced to listen, in the context of a discussion on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, to a long list of baseless allegations against Israel's security policy and its alleged capabilities. These accusations have nothing to do, of course, with the Register or with transparency in armaments. Most of the countries that criticized Israel are unwilling to subject their own arms transfers to any transparency measures and have no intention of implementing their own ideas on the efficiency or the scope of the United Nations Register.

The one important advantage of the Register is its modesty. It is a confidence-building measure that can be used as a basis for continuation or extensions primarily in a regional context. This is the reason for Israel's participation in the Register, but, for some of the speakers, the gradual building of confidence seems to be a reason for concern. They are especially unhappy because of Israel's determination to maintain its ability to defend itself.

Israel's self-defence policy is not a source of concern about global peace — there are other real sources of concern in the Middle East — nor should it be a source of concern to countries in our region which do not have aggressive intentions against my country. If countries that do have such intentions are concerned by Israel's ability to defend itself, it should be seen as a contribution to regional stability.

Moving away from today's environment of hatred and heightened tensions to a safer Middle East requires the willingness to seek peace, reconciliation and agreements on mutual confidence-building measures. Participating in the Register is an important step in the right direction, and we call upon our neighbours to adopt this measure.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Jon Yong Ryong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The delegation of Germany expressed a concern of a one-sided nature about the current situation on the Korean peninsula. The concern of the German delegation has resulted from the hostile policy of the United States towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Therefore, if the hostile relations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States is terminated on the basis of mutual respect and equal sovereignty, all issues will be resolved smoothly. However, if the United States persists in its moves to apply pressure and to stifle the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by force, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will have no option but to take tougher counteraction.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of the United States to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. McGinnis (United States): I appreciate having this chance to reply and I will not continue the debate. I would just point out that the United States has, over the past several years, attempted to engage in a dialogue with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We will continue to do that. The events or actions which were referred to by others here in terms of compliance were a result of that dialogue. I think that is the way that we see as the best procedure in trying to improve the situation on the peninsula of Korea.

The Chairman: I call on the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Jon Yong Ryong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): At the appropriate time, the position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea concerning the current fuss created by the United States will be clearly published.

The Chairman: Before adjourning the meeting, I would like to inform delegates that the Committee will continue to act at its next meeting on the draft resolutions contained in informal working paper No. 4, which has just been distributed. The draft resolutions that the Committee will act upon at the next meeting are as follows. In cluster 1, nuclear weapons: A/C.1/57/L.23/Rev.1, Bilateral strategic nuclear arms reductions and the new strategic framework; A/C.1/57/L.32, Missiles; A/C.1/57/L.42, A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons; and A/C.1/57/L.43, Nuclear disarmament. In cluster 4, conventional weapons: A/C.1/57/L.36, Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. In cluster 9, related matters of disarmament and international security: A/C.1/57/L.45, Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures. Finally, in cluster 10, international security: A/C.1/57/L.31, Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region; and A/C.1/57/L.47/Rev.1, Maintenance of international security — good neighbourliness, stability and development in South-Eastern Europe.

I would like to inform the Committee that a total of only eight draft resolutions will be available for action for the meetings set for Thursday and Friday — four draft resolutions on Thursday and four on Friday. Consequently, in order to efficiently utilize the time and facilities allocated to the Committee, I propose that we take action on the eight draft resolutions together on Friday morning, and cancel the meetings scheduled for tomorrow morning and Friday afternoon.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee agrees to do so.

It is so decided.

The Secretary would now like to make some announcements.

Mr. Sattar (Secretary of the Committee): I wish to inform members of the Committee that the text of draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.2/Rev.1 will be re-issued for technical reasons and will be made available tomorrow to the Committee.

I would also like to inform delegates that members of the Arab League would like to meet this afternoon, immediately following the adjournment of this meeting. Draft resolution A/C.1/57/L.2/Rev. 1 will be circulated, hopefully, this afternoon.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.